# STATE OF ILLINOIS ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION

Ameren Transmission Company of Illinois	}	
	}	
Petition for a Certificate of Public Convenience	}	
and Necessity, pursuant to Section 8-406.1 of	}	
the Illinois Public Utilities Act, and an Order	}	
pursuant to Section 8-503 of the Public Utilities	}	Case No.: 12-0598
Act, to Construct, Operate and Maintain a New	}	
High Voltage Electric Service Line and Related	}	
Facilities in the Counties of Adams, Brown, Cass,	}	
Champaign, Christian, Clark, Coles, Edgar,	}	
Fulton, Macon, Montgomery, Morgan, Moultrie,	}	
Pike, Sangamon, Schuyler, Scott, and Shelby,	}	ri
Illinois.	}	

# REPLY BRIEF ON REHEARING OF THE MORGAN, SANGAMON, AND SCOTT COUNTIES LAND PRESERVATION GROUP

NOW COMES the Morgan, Sangamon, and Scott Counties Land Preservation Group (hereinafter referred to as "MSSCLPG"), by and through its attorneys, Edward D. McNamara, Jr. and Joseph H. O'Brien of McNamara & Evans, and for its Reply Brief on Rehearing, states as follows:

# I. INTRODUCTION

MSSCLPG will reply to the initial briefs of Ameren Transmission Company of Illinois ("ATXI") and the Staff of the Illinois Commerce Commission ("Staff"), and will limit its reply to that segment between Meredosia and Pawnee.

## II. LEGAL STANDARD

The Initial Brief of Staff adds an important element that must be considered as to all segments. ATXI bears the burden of proof. It must prove by a preponderance of the evidence that it is employing the least-cost routing for the various segments.

#### IV. REHEARING ROUTES

### A. Meredosia-Pawnee

The Staff reviews the twelve criteria that the Commission utilizes to determine the "least-cost means." The Staff correctly interprets the table present by ATXI Witness Donell Murphy on p. 7 of ATXI Exhibit 3.0(RH). Based upon its analysis, Staff states in its Initial Brief on Rehearing that the route advocated by MSSCLPG "remains" superior to other proposed," and that the table presented by Ms. Murphy "demonstrates that the MSSCLPG Route is equal to or superior to the ATXI [Route] for nearly all criteria listed, and that even criteria that are identified as equal in the table would actually favor the MSSCLPG Route because there would be 21 fewer miles of transmission line causing those impacts." (6)

It cannot be overemphasized that the Staff of the Illinois Commerce Commission is the only disinterested witness in this case. Also, it should not go without mention that Mr. Greg Rockrohr, by virtue of education and experience, is eminently well qualified to render his opinions herein.

MSSCLPG concurs with the analysis set forth in the Initial Brief of Staff of the twelve criteria as they relate to the two routing options for the segment of the route from Meredosia to Pawnee.

In replying to ATXI, MSSCLPG would note that ATXI refers to its stipulations with MSCLTF and FutureGen. These stipulations must be considered within the context of this case. First, the route now supported by MSSCLPG is the very route that MSCLTF originally proposed to this Commission. Members of MSCLTF opposed the ATXI proposed Primary Route and suggested the route now advocated by MSSCLPG. The route now advocated by MSSCLPG clearly satisfies the interests of MSCLTF. MSCLTF has presented no evidence herein. Entering into the stipulation

was clearly a well reasoned decision by MSCLTF as it satisfied its interests and MSCLTF was able to simply step back and allow the remaining parties litigate the matter. MSCLTF was able to save time and no doubt much expense by entering into the stipulation. Either way this case goes, whether it be pursuant to the order entered on August 20, 2013, or pursuant to an order on rehearing adopting the route now advocated by MSSCLPG, MSCLTF's interests will be satisfied. MSCLTF made a wise decision, but the stipulation on its face should not be utilized as an indication that MSCLTF is now opposing the route that it originally presented for consideration, nor should the stipulation be used to indicate that the route originally proposed by MSCLTF would not satisfy the interests of MSCLTF.

FutureGen likewise stipulated with ATXI herein. Once again, FutureGen made a wise decision to enter into a stipulation. It was able to conserve time and expense that would have been required to litigate this matter. Again, however, the stipulation on its face should not be presented as the only routing option that would satisfy the interests of FutureGen. In fact, FutureGen has acknowledged that "a route following the existing 138 kV line from Meredosia to Pawnee, Illinois, as proposed by [MSCLTF] in their Supplemental Identification of Alternate Route, filed on January 3, 2013, would substantially resolve the FutureGen Alliance's concerns." (MSSCLPG Cross Exhibit 1) Thus, the stipulation with FutureGen, much like the stipulation with MSCLTF, has no probative value as to the issue of what parties actually support the route now advocated by MSSCLPG. Both the route advocated by MSSCLPG and the route advocated by ATXI will have equal impact upon FutureGen and MSCLTF.

ATXI refers to ATXI Exhibit 9.0(RH), the sur-testimony of Jeffrey V. Hackman, P.E., for the proposition that the MSSCLPG Route increases the amount of paralleling by 70%. Mr. Hackman also states as follows in his sur-rebuttal testimony: "As I explained in my rebuttal testimony and

rehearing rebuttal testimony, absent sufficient separation between the lines, paralleling the Project's Transmission Line with the entire length of an existing 138 kV line (for 55 miles) between Meredosia and Pawnee poses a threat to the reliability of both lines that can be avoided by re-approval of the route that the Commission approved in its August 2013 Order." [ATXI Exhibit 9.0(RH), 7:144-149] Mr. Hackman, however, goes on to state that he agrees with Mr. Rockrohr that the MSSCLPG Route would comply with NERC reliability rules. The undersigned would submit that it would expect ATXI to build this segment with sufficient separation between the lines. Likewise, there appears to be no question that paralleling the lines would comply with a well established applicable rule, namely NERC reliability rules. Mr. Hackman agrees with Mr. Rockrohr and states as follows: "I recognize, as Mr. Rockrohr notes, that more parties would accept the MSSCLPG route, and that factor certainly weighs in favor of that route." [ATXI Exhibit 9.0(RH), 8:155-156]

It should also be noted that, pursuant to Notice of Administrative Law Judges' Ruling issued herein on October 2, 2013, MSSCLPG supplied the Commission with an exhaustive list of affected landowners along the MSSCLPG Route (List of Property Owners, filed October 7, 2013). Not one affected landowner chose to intervene in this matter and oppose selection of the MSSCLPG Route.

MSSCLPG presented the testimony of Expert Witness Steven J. Lazorchak, P.E., CEM, who in his Sur-Rebuttal Testimony on Rehearing, summed up his expert opinion from an engineering perspective as to the two routing options now being considered as follows:

"The engineering process (in this case the selection of the optimal route for the 345 kV segment of transmission line between Meredosia and Pawnee) includes a variety of realistic constraints, such as economic factors, safety, reliability, aesthetics, ethics, and social impact. The economic factors, in particular the 'least-cost' approach, should be commensurate with good engineering practice, Illinois Commerce Commission and MISO mandated, and should be of particular import to the shareholders of ATXI as it is a significant financial contributor to this Project. There

can be a distinction drawn between 'least initial dollar cost' and 'least-cost means,' which would take into account factors beyond the initial costs of design, construction, and operation, but no such evidence has been presented to date that would justify an initial expenditure of approximately \$36.78 million more to construct the Rebuttal Recommended Route as opposed to the MSCLTF Route." (MSSCLPG Exhibit 14.0, 2:24-35)

MSSCLPG would emphasize that the testimony of Mr. Lazorchak, as stated above, as well as all testimony presented on rehearing by MSSCLPG witnesses herein was admitted without objection. ATXI chose not to cross examine any of the MSSCLPG witnesses who provided testimony on rehearing.

#### 1. <u>Length of the Line</u>

This criterion is undisputed. The MSSCLPG Route would be 18.3 miles shorter than the ATXI Route.

#### 2. Difficulty and Cost of Construction

This criterion is undisputed. The MSSCLPG Route would cost some \$36.8 million less to construct than the ATXI Route.

# 3. <u>Difficulty and Cost of Operation and Maintenance</u>

As is set forth herein above, it is always possible to avoid paralleling. ATXI's analysis as to the difficulty and cost of operation and maintenance fails to take into consideration the fact that paralleling in this case will reduce the number of miles that must be operated and maintained by 18.3, a reduction of more than 24% from the ATXI advocated route. ATXI has chosen not to quantify, through historical analysis or otherwise, the additional costs associated with paralleling lines.

#### 4. <u>Environmental Impacts</u>

ATXI asserts that MSSCLPG has provided no evidence on rehearing for this criterion that would warrant reversal of the Commission's original decision. This is simply not correct. The Direct Testimony on Rehearing of Wayne Edwards (MSSCLPG Exhibit 5.0, pp. 3-5) and Direct

Testimony on Rehearing of Darrel Thoma (MSSCLPG Exhibit 11.0, pp. 6-7) make clear that the route advocated by MSSCLPG will have 18.3 less miles of transmission line to impact the environment. Testimony was presented on rehearing by MSSCLPG witnesses Wayne Edwards, Rustin Godfrey, Garry Niemeyer, Steve Rhea, Jeff Spencer, and Darrel Thoma reiterating, reaffirming, and substantiating the previous testimony of MSSCLPG. No new evidence was presented by ATXI on rehearing to dispute nor debunk those statements. ATXI Witness Donell Murphy reaffirmed the fact that the MSCLTF Route would provide less ground disturbance in Table 1 to her Direct Testimony on Rehearing. [ATXI Exhibit 3.0(RH) 7:93]

# 5. <u>Impacts on Historical Resources</u>

ATXI notes that there are five archaeological sites along the ATXI route and only three along the MSSCLPG route, but goes on to give the gratuitous comment that "all sites can be spanned." This comment is apparently added to indicate that there is no essential difference from an archaeological standpoint between the two routes. That is simply not the case. The only thing we know for sure from the evidence is that there exist two less archaeological sites along the route proposed by MSSCLPG.

#### 6. <u>Social and Land Use Impacts</u>

ATXI asserts that MSSCLPG has provided no new evidence on rehearing related to this criterion that would warrant reversal of the Commission's original determination. This is in fact contrary to the evidence. The Direct Testimony on Rehearing of Wayne Edwards (MSSCLPG Exhibit 5.0, pp. 4-6, and related Exhibit 11.1), The Direct Testimony on Rehearing of Paul Bergschneider (MSSCLPG Exhibit 6.0), The Direct Testimony on Rehearing of Garry Niemeyer (MSSCLPG Exhibit 7.0, pp. 2-4), The Direct Testimony on Rehearing of Rustin Godfrey (MSSCLPG Exhibit 8.0, pp. 2-3), The Direct Testimony on Rehearing of Steve Rhea (MSSCLPG Exhibit 9.0, pp. 1-3), The Direct Testimony on Rehearing of Jeff Spencer (MSSCLPG Exhibit 10.0,

pp. 3-5), The Direct Testimony on Rehearing of Darrel Thoma (MSSCLPG Exhibit 11.0, pp. 4-9) all present new evidence as it relates to this criterion.

# 7. Number of Affected Landowners and other Stakeholders

This criterion is undisputed. The MSSCLPG Route would affect far fewer landowners than the ATXI Route.

# 8. <u>Proximity to Homes and Other Structures</u>

The Direct Testimony on Rehearing of Darrel Thoma (MSSCLPG Exhibit 11.0, and related Exhibits 11.1 and 11.2) illustrates that there exist a total of thirty improvements within 500 feet of the existing 138 kV line, the route advocated by MSSCLPG. With 500 feet of the route advocated by ATXI there exist 126 improvements. This is consistent with what one might expect. The stakeholders have simply failed to build or maintain structures and homes in proximity to the existing 138 kV line. As noted herein above, not one landowner upon and along the MSSCLPG Route chose to intervene in this matter.

### 9. <u>Proximity to Existing and Planned Development</u>

ATXI asserts that there exists no evidence in the record concerning the proximity of either routing option to existing development that would warrant reversal of the Commission's original recommendation. This is contrary to the record. The Direct Testimony on Rehearing of Garry Niemeyer (MSSCLPG Exhibit 7.0) indicates that Mr. Niemeyer's 47-acre plot is adjoined to the south by an existing subdivision. A subdivision exists immediately across the road from Mr. Niemeyer's 47-acre plot. Several homes exist along the north and east sides of Mr. Niemeyer's 47-acre plot. A church and day school exist along the south side of the 47-acre plot. This testimony goes un-rebutted. The claim of Mr. Niemeyer is certainly substantiated. Not only is there existing development as testified to by Mr. Niemeyer, but the existence of subdivisions and residences, a church and day school, in the immediate vicinity certainly adds credence to his assertion as to future

development of his 47-acre plot as a subdivision. The Direct Testimony on Rehearing of Rustin Godfrey (MSSCLPG Exhibit 8.0) indicates that the route advocated by ATXI would lie within approximately 100 feet of Mr. Godfrey's residence.

#### 10. Community Acceptance

ATXI asserts that its route has the widest community acceptance based upon the stipulations with FutureGen, MSCLTF, and the Pearce Family. As is stated above, the stipulations with FutureGen and MSCLTF amount simply to wise strategic decisions by those intervenors which saved time and expense. Also as is set forth above, the stipulations do not indicate a preference for the ATXI route. As noted herein above, not one landowner upon and along the MSSCLPG Route chose to intervene in this matter.

#### 11. Visual Impact

There currently exists a 138 kV line that has a visual impact along 57.3 miles. ATXI has proposed placing a new line along a route that would have a visual impact upon 75.6 miles of additional land. There certainly exists a very material difference between the ATXI route and the route advocated by MSSCLPG. The ATXI route currently has no visual impact from an existing line. The 57.3 miles of line along the route advocated by MSSCLPG will have some impact but certainly much less impact than the line proposed by ATXI.

### 12. <u>Presence of Existing Corridors</u>

There is an existing corridor. This is the corridor that MSSCLPG advocates for the placement of the line.

Respectfully Submitted,
Morgan, Sangamon, and Scott Counties
Land Preservation Group,
By and through its attorneys,

Edward D. McNamara, Jr.

Joseph H. O'Brien

#### **VERIFICATION**

STATE OF ILLINOIS }SS COUNTY OF SANGAMON }

Edward D. McNamara, Jr., being first duly sworn, deposes and says that he is authorized to execute this Reply Brief; that he has read the above and foregoing document, has knowledge of the facts stated therein; and herewith states that the matters set forth therein are true in substance and in fact.

Subscribed and Sworn to before me this 7th day of January, 2014.

EOWARD DENNIS MCNAMARA III MY COMMISSION EXPIRES. JUNE 30, 2015

## **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

Edward D. McNamara, Jr., an attorney, hereby certifies that he served copies of the foregoing Reply Brief on the individuals shown on the attached Service List, via electronic mail, on January 7, 2014.

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